

Nehemiah 2

3-25-15

3 + 3

I. Slide1 **Announce:** *Stir (Kevin & Zach)*

- A. Easter Times:
- B. Slide2 Women's Retreat Registration - Cindy is taking registration in the foyer.
- C. Slide3a Women's Aspire Conf - Fri night May 1st here. Tickets in back.

II. Slide3b **Intro:**

- A. Last chapter it was **Weep & Pray**, this chapter it is **Wait & Pray**.
- B. Recap Nehemiah's concerns from ch.1 (1:2-4)
- C. Slide4 **Patriotism**. I like what *Adlai/Add-lay Stevenson II* [Former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N.] said, *Patriotism was not a short & frenzied outburst of emotion, but the tranquil & steady dedication of a lifetime.*
 - 1. Remember Nehemiah was praying for his nation **before** he even had **seen it, or lived in it...now that's true Patriotism.**
- D. Slide5 Title: 3 + 3
 - 1. 3 qualities of a great leader: **Waiting, Praying, Asking.**
 - 2. 3 essentials to Christian Service: **Investigation, Cooperation, Determination.**

III. Slide6 **WAITING (1)**

- A. Nehemiah **didn't** up and quit his job **& then** make haste to Jerusalem.
 - 1. Slide7 **Suetonius** [sooA-TONE-ee-us] (Roman historian, just after time of Christ) **said, Make haste slowly.**
 - 2. **No**, he **prayed & worked faithfully for 4 months.**
 - 3. He waited to approach the king in the Lord's time.
 - a) **Is there anything he is asking you to wait for right now?**
 - b) **How** are you dealing with it? **Need some tips?** (Nehemiah Nuggets)
- B. Slide8a 3 scriptures that help us **not** to rush into things:
 - 1. **Stand still** and see the salvation of the LORD. Ex.14:13
 - 2. Slide8b **Sit still** my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out; for the man will not rest until he has concluded the matter this day. Ruth 3:18
 - 3. Slide8c **Be still** and know that I am God. Ps.46:10
- C. **Waiting** on the Lord is not **wasting** time **but investing** time.
 - 1. **Working** is easier than **waiting...but wait any ways.**
 - 2. A **Latin Proverb, Impulse manages all things badly.**

- a) We're in such a hurry. Annual cost of **running red lights** (in medical bills, car repairs, etc) \$7 billion. Average amount of **time saved** by running a red light: 50 seconds.¹

D. **Slide9a** Do you have faith to **wait**?

1. Let these Scriptures seep in:

- a) Is. 28:16 **Whoever believes will not act hastily.**
 b) Is.30:18b **Blessed are all those who wait for Him.**
 c) Hab.2:1-3 **I will stand my watch** And set myself on the rampart, And **watch** to see what He will say to me, And what I will answer when I am corrected. Then the LORD answered me and said: "Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for **an appointed time**; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it **tarryes, wait for it**; Because **it will surely come, It will not tarry.**

2. **Slide9b** Faith + Patience ≠ laziness

3. In what area is the lord asking **you** to wait in?

IV. **Slide10** **PRAYING (2-4)**

A. Why was Nehemiah **afraid**? What was the rule of the day?

1. No one was to appear before the king w/**sadness** or bad news.
 2. Esther 4:1,2 **When Mordecai learned all that had happened, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the midst of the city. He cried out with a loud and bitter cry. He went as far as the front of the king's gate, for no one might enter the king's gate clothed with sackcloth.**
 3. *You could lose you life for having one bad day at the office.*
 4. My, how some have *perfected the act of sadness* among others.
 a) Each time you speak to them it is the *whoa is me* syndrome. Often simply seeking attention (I'm not referring to those legitimately sad)

B. Through **fear**...a splendid **courage**.

1. **His secret?**...Prayer.
 2. He was effective in his **911 Prayers** *because* he spent **much time alone** w/the Lord. *i.e.* all of chapter 1. **And** 4 months worth so far.
 a) *Regular times of prayer must be the context for all our instant prayers.*

C. Do you talk to God like this throughout your day?

¹ U.S. Department of Transportation, cited in Hope Health Letter (2/96). "To Verify," Leadership.

- D. **Interesting to note**, Nehemiah could come to the *God's Throne of Grace* any time, **but** he had to **wait an invitation** before *Artaxerxes throne*?
- E. (3) In typical *Rabbinical Jewish fashion*, he answers a question, w/a question. (not demanding)
- F. **Tombs** – why does he mention this?
1. A pagan monarch wouldn't be moved to sorrow over **the ruins** of Jerusalem, **but** would show respect for **the dead**.

V. Slide11 **ASKING (5-10)**

- A. He needed safe passage & building materials.
- B. He answers the king **confidently & respectfully**.
1. Which of these 2 do you struggle with?
 2. If you were telling the story to a friend would it come across too **confident w/no respect**? Like, *(with attitude) then I told that king...*]
 3. **Or** would you show **respect only & leave off any confidence**? [uh, uh, uh, I don't need anything Mr.King Sir!]
 - a) Remember you're one of **The Kings** kids. *When you speak up for your King, or on behalf of Him, or as an ambassador from Him...Speak up, with respect.*
- C. So he asks for 2 things:
1. Slide12a **SEND ME** (5,6)
 - a) Whenever God wants to get a work done, He uses **willing** people. (He can override of course)
 - b) Nehemiah had been **planning** his work **carefully**, **so** he was able to give the king satisfactory answers.
 - c) **It is not clear thinking & organization OR Prayer. But instead...**
Slide12b *Prayer + clear thinking & organization.*
 - d) They are not **opposites** **but allies, best friends.**
 - e) **Nehemiah was very thorough** as a leader. *He knew the time schedule & even had his building list made.*
 - f) He even knew the name of the keeper of the forest. (8)
 2. Slide12c **GIVE ME** (7-10)
 3. How does this relate to **Ezra 8:22** who, for integrity's sake, wouldn't ask this from the king?
 - a) **Ezra** refused military protection for **a testimony to the faithfulness of God** (i.e. God will take care of his own)

b) **Nehemiah** on the other hand was a **governor** on **official business**; he **could not** travel without his military escort.

D. (8) He trusted in the Lords **strong hand** (1:10) & in His **good hand** (2:8) to accomplish this great task.

E. Now, 3 essentials to Christian Service: *Investigation, Cooperation, Determination.*

VI. Slide13 **INVESTIGATION (11-16)** *Feel it, experience it yourself*

A. Before asking for help, he **personally** was acquainted with the needs.

1. He's forced to **dismount** & have to actually **stumble over** the debris.
2. **Horseback to on foot.**
3. Slide14 Difference of watching **ground zero** on TV **to** standing next to it after 9-11
 - a) **Such emotional ties.** [St Patricks Cathedral, Bag Pipes, orange buckets]

B. **Dedicated leaders are awake when others are asleep.**

1. Slide15a They also **see more in darkness than others** see in the daylight.
2. **In the night...by night** (12,13) - *It was dark.*
 - a) Slide15b This is when God has you wrestle in some dark Gethsemane prayer.

VII. Slide16 **COOPERATION (17,18)** *Secure others to help you*

A. (17,18) Nehemiah didn't believe in a *one-man band*.

1. He challenged the leaders to work **with** him, **not for** him.
2. Slide17 **1 can chase a 1000, but 2 put 10,000 to flight.** Deut.32:30 paraphrase
3. **The motive?** To **not** be a reproach (17b).
 - a) He sought the **Glory of God** & the **Good of the nation.**

B. **If you are a Leader** here are some questions.²

1. **Do you have a burden first in your heart** for the work the Lord has given you to do? (12)
2. Next, are you willing to **sacrifice** to see it accomplished?
3. Are you **patient** in gathering the facts & **planning** the work?
4. Are you willing to allow others to **help you & learn** along w/you, **or** are you a lone ranger?
5. Are people following **you or the Lord?**

C. **If the Lord has you as a Follower in a ministry...**

² Adapted from Warren Weirsbe, pg.35

1. Do you **listen** to your leader?
 2. Do you **share** his/her **burdens**?
 3. Do you **cling to the past** & are afraid of God doing something new?
 4. Are you **cooperating w/the enemy** in any way?
 5. Do you tend to be a **destroyer** or a **builder**?
- D. Slide18,19 Well, when ever you are **shown** the needs, decided to **meet** that need, & then **rise** to the occasion...*then opposition* is usually aroused. (19,20)

VIII.Slide20 **DETERMINATION (19,20) Push through trouble**

- A. Slide21 (19,20) Who are these guys?
1. **Sanballat** – chief political enemy of Nehemiah.
 - a) He was **governor of Samaria**. Hear his *attitude* in 4:1,2.
 - b) A letter found by archeologists dated to 407 BC confirmed *his position*.
 2. **Tobiah** – is thought to be a Jew w/lands in Gilead. [name means *pleasing to Jehovah*]:(
 - a) He has many family ties in Jerusalem.
 - b) The phrase *Ammonite official* refers to his **position**, not his **race**.
 3. **Geshem** – probably chief of the Arabs, south of Palestine.
- B. Slide22,23 The *weapon of ridicule* is the only weapon some carry...and boy they can wield it well.
1. This is the very weapon enemies used back in Ezra 4.
 2. **Ridicule** is a very effective means to **discourage** us from acting.
 - a) *A smirk, a raised eyebrow, or a mocking laugh* have kept many Christians from teaching Children's Church, playing an instrument, following a call to the mission field, or moving towards full time ministry.
 - b) Have you ever run into a Sanballat or a Tobiah? They have many descendants in society today...ever meet one?
 - (1) I remember being discouraged from moving out here.
 - c) What have you been **talked out of**? **Embarrassed by**?
 - d) Will you pray about doing them again?
 3. This means **encouragement** must go **so far**, if the **opposite** is true.
 - a) Who on the other hand has been quiet the encouragement to you? (Gary Ansdell w/Is.61)
- C. Nehemiah performed *no signs, no wonders, nor any prophesy's*, he just faithfully **did his work & prepared a city for the coming of the Messiah**. Dan.9:25.